(c) whether the allotment of the space is still pending despite of full amounts nine years back;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for the delay in allotment; and

(e) the time by when a final decision is likely to be taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATARAMAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As reported by Delhi Development Authority 15 persons got themselves registered by paying registration deposit of Rs.20,000/- each.

(c) to (e) The registrants deposited the amount towards cost of the unit, but the allotment of specific unit could not be made because of non-commissioning of lifts and fire safety arrangements. Now since the completion report of the said services has been received, the allotment of specific units to the eligible registrants will be made through draw of lots.

[Translation]

Mahoba-Khajuraho Rail Line

326. SHRI GANGA CHARAN RAJPUT : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the estimated total cost of construction of Mahoba-Khajuraho rail line;

(b) the details of the funds allocated for the above line during the current financial year; and

(c) the present status of the project ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) The estimated cost of new rail line between Lalitpur Satna, Rewa-Sidhi Singrauli and Mahoba-Khajuraho (541 kms.) is Rs.974.982 crores. However, Mahoba-Khajuraho section is not yet a part of the sanctioned project. It is proposed to obtain the necessary clearances for this sector and then include it with the approval of Parliament.

(b) The outlay for 1997-98 is Rs.0.01 crores.

(c) The work is to be taken up after the necessary clearances have been obtained.

[English]

Import of Coal by SAIL

327. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether Steel Authority of India Ltd. has decided to reduce import of coal;

(b) whether SAIL has decided to use domestic coal with more ash content;

(c) whether SAIL will also have its own coal washeries; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) The requirement of imported coking coal is dependent on the qualitative and quantitative gaps between the total requirement and availabillity of coking coal from domestic sources and landed cost of domestic vis-a-vis imported coking coal. As an overall strategy to reduce cost of production at SAIL plants the requirement of coking coal, including imported coking coal, is being reduced by adopting techno-economic measures.

(b) SAIL is using domestic coking coal with higher ash content by suitably blending the same with low ash imported coking coal for use in the blast furnaces.

(c) and (d) SAIL owns two washeries-one at Chasnalla (Captive to Indian Iron and Steel Company Ltd., a subsidiary of SAIL) and another at Durgapur. At present there is no plan to add any new washery.

Prasar Bharati Act

328. KUMARI SUSHILA TIRIYA : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether a number of employees of AIR/DD have been sent to various Ministries after the Prasar Bharati Act came into force;

(b) if so, the criteria adopted in this regard;

(c) whether employees will be given option or they will be shifted as per discretion of higher officers; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) The employees will be given option as per provisions of the Prasar Bharati Act,1990.

[Translation]

DD Kendra in Gujarat

329. SHRI JAYSINGH CHAUHAN : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether Shamlaji Doordarshan Kendra in Sabarkantha district in Gujarat was inaugurated two and half years ago but it has not been commissioned;

(b) if so, reasons for not commissioning; and

(c) the time by which it is likely to be commissioned?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY) : (a) to (c) Though the Low Power TV transmitter (LPT) at Shamlaji was inaugurated in Janaury,1996, the transmitter could not be made operational due to non-availability of staff sanction for operation and maintenance of the project. Truncated staff sanction for the LPT has since been received and partial transmission from the LPT would commence as soon as deployment of staff is made. Regular transmission from the LPT would, however, depend or sanction of full complement of staff by the competent authority.

Electrification of Villages in Hilly Areas

330. SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT 'BACHDA' : Will the MINISTER OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether any project for electrification of villages particularly in hilly areas is pending with the Government;

(b) if so, the efforts being made for its success in hilly areas;

(c) whether solar energy apparatus are not available in hilly areas of Uttar Pradesh;

(d) if so, the details and reasons therefor; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (CAPT. JAI NARAYAN PRASAD NISHAD) : (a) to (e) Under the Photovoltaic Programme of Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources a number of projects have been taken up for electrification of villages in hilly areas of Uttar Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and some North-Eastern States. These projects involve solar appliances like solar Lanterns, Home Lighting Systems, Street Lighting Systems and small power plants.

During 1997-98, the entire North-Eastern Region, Hill Districts of Uttar Pradesh and the State of Jammu & Kashmir have been identified as High Focus Area under the Solar Photovoltaic Programme.

In Uttar Pradesh the Programme is implemented through the Non-Conventional Development Agency (NEDA), U.P., which distributes solar energy equipment in all districts, including the hill districts, Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources has sanctioned 3000 Home Lighting Systems for electrification of villages on the Districts of Uttar Pradesh. NEDA proposes to electrify 52 villages using these systems during 1997-98.

Kota Airport

331. VAIDYA DAU DAYAL JOSHI : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) the amount spent on the renovation of Kota Airport during the last five years and the type of work on which this amount was spent;

(b) whether any approval was given to the private companies to operate flights for this industrial city of Rajasthan on Delhi-Jaipur-Kota and Kota-Jaipur-Delhi air-routes;

(c) if so, the details thereof alonwith the period in which these flights where operated on these routes;

(d) whether the department had signed any contract with the said companies before initiating the air service; and

(e) if so, the reasons for discontinuing the said air service ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PALIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATRAJAN) : (a) The amount spent on the renovation of Kota airport during the last five years is Rs.1.56 crores.

(b) to (e) Airlines are free to operate their services to any airport in the country , subject to approval by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation, fulfilment of the route dispersal guidelines and other relevant provisions of rules prescribed by the Government, and meeting the requirements of permits issued to them . Government does not enter into contract with airlines.

[English]

Tickets Sale in Delhi Ring Railway

332. SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) passengers tickets sale turn-out in Delhi ring railway during 1995-96 and 1996-97; and

(b) the net earnings of ring railway in Delhi during the same period ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) Number of passenger tickets sold in Delhi ring railway during 1995-96 and 1996-97 was 11,06,400 and 12,53700 respectively.

(b) Net earnings during the same period were Rs. 29,43,780 and Rs. 32,84,910 respectively.